

REMARKS

The drawings associated with FIGs. 1-3 are objected to because they are not legible. In response thereto, Applicants have provided replacement drawings.

Claims 19-22 are objected because of informalities. In response thereto, Applicants have amended several claims to address the issues raised by the Examiner.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-12, 14-16, 18, and 20-22 are rejected under 35 USC §102(a) as being anticipated by Matsuura et al., WO 02/10843 A2.

Independent claim 1 recites a photonic bandgap microcavity. The microcavity includes a flexible membrane structure that can experience strain. A photonic bandgap waveguide element is formed on the flexible membrane structure having a defect so that when the flexible membrane structure is strained, the photonic bandgap waveguide element is tuned to a selective amount.

Independent claim 12 recites a method of forming a photonic bandgap microcavity. The method includes providing a flexible membrane structure that can experience strain. The method also includes forming a photonic bandgap waveguide element on the flexible membrane structure having a defect so that when the flexible membrane structure is strained, the photonic bandgap waveguide element is tuned to a selective amount.

Matsuura et al. '843 describes a photonic crystal and a photonic device having a photonic crystal, configured by changing its physical geometry in at least one region to alter light propagation and/or confinement. The configuring means may include electrostrictive,

piezoelectric or magnetostrictive components of the photonic crystal, or an actuation device affixed to the photonic crystal.

However, Matsuura et al. '843 discusses photonic crystals and supports that have piezoelectric effects. The top and bottom electrodes of Matsuura et al. '843 show this limitation. The flexible membrane structure comprises semiconductor materials that do not exhibit piezoelectric effects. The requirement is the attachment of piezoelectric materials to the flexible membrane structure. The present invention translates the strain from the piezoelectric elements to the flexible membrane, and then to photonic crystals elements. This permits much larger design flexibility in designing and selecting the piezoelectric elements, the flexible membrane and the photonic crystals elements separately, before combining them into the final device. Therefore, Matsuura et al. '843 does not anticipate either of claims 1 or 12.

As to claims 3-5, 7, 9-11, 14-16, 18, and 20-22, they are dependent on claims 1 and 12, respectively. Therefore, claims 3-5, 7, 9-11, 14-16, 18, and 20-22 are also allowable for the same reasons argued with respect to claims 1 and 12.

Claims 2 and 13 are rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Matsuura et al. '843 in view of Caracci et al., US 6,445,838.

Caracci et al. '838 describes a bulk optical silica fiber.

Given that claims 2 and 13 are dependent on claims 1 and 12, the reasons argued for claims 1 and 12 are also applicable here. Also, Caracci et al. '838 does not address the deficiencies of Matsuura et al. '843. Therefore, the proposed combination of Matsuura et al. '843 and Caracci et al. '838 does not render obvious claims 2 and 13.

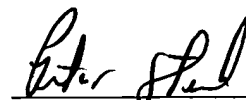
Claims 6, 8, 17, and 19 are rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Matsuura et al. '843.

Given that claims 6, 8, 17, and 19 are dependent on claims 1 and 12, the reasons argued for claims 1 and 12 are also applicable here. Also, the additional limitations of claims 6, 8, 17, and 19 further limit the inventive concept not taught by Matsuura et al. Therefore, Matsuura et al. '843 does not render obvious claims 6, 8, 17, and 19.

In view of the above amendments and for all the reasons set forth above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objections and rejections made under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. Accordingly, an early indication of allowability is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any questions regarding matters pending in this application, please feel free to contact the undersigned below.

Respectfully submitted,

 *Reg. No. 47,298*
Matthew E. Connors
Registration No. 33,298
Gauthier & Connors LLP
225 Franklin Street, Suite 3300
Boston, Massachusetts 02110
Telephone: (617) 426-9180
Extension: 112